EU calls for 'maximum transparency' in Venezuela election

By **Reuters**

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Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro waves as he attends an event at the National Electoral Council (CNE) to be proclaimed as winner of the country's presidential election, in Caracas, Venezuela July 29, 2024. REUTERS/Leonardo Fernandez Viloria Purchase Licensing Rights

BRUSSELS, July 29 (Reuters) - The European Union cannot recognise the results of Venezuela's presidential election until all polling station records are published and verified, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said on Monday.

"The EU calls on the Venezuelan Electoral Council (CNE) to exercise maximum transparency in the process of results tabulation," Borrell said in a statement.

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Venezuela's national electoral authority said just after midnight that President Nicolas Maduro had won a third term with 51% of the vote - a result that would extend a quarter-century of socialist rule. Independent exit polls pointed to a big opposition win.

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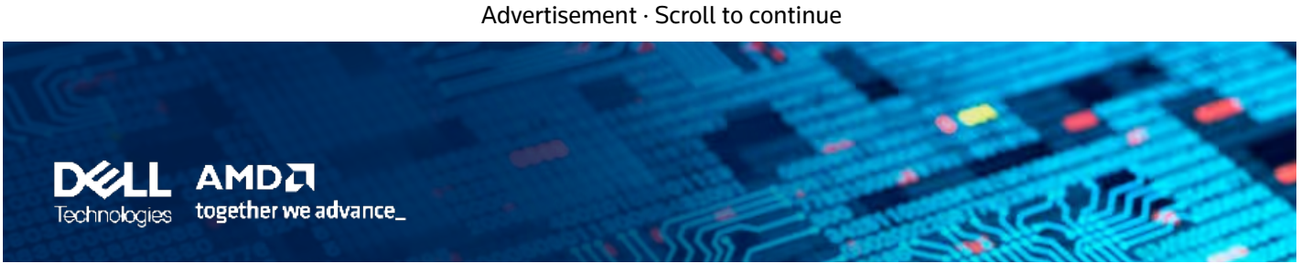

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Borrell said the EU called on Venezuela's authorities to ensure the full and timely investigation of any post-electoral complaints and grievances.

He said there were credible reports the election was marred by "numerous flaws and irregularities".

"Obstacles to the participation of opposition candidates, deficiencies in the voter registry, and imbalanced media access contributed to unequal electoral conditions," he said.

He added that the European Union was concerned about arbitrary detentions and intimidation of members of the opposition and civil society throughout the electoral process.

He also appealed for calm and urged security forces to ensure full respect for human rights, including the right to peaceful assembly.

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In May, the CNE revoked its invitation to the EU for it to send election observers, citing ongoing sanctions on the government.

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